



## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

#### 50 CFR Part 660

[Docket No. 201204-0325]

RIN 0648-BL10

### Magnuson-Stevens Act Provisions; Fisheries Off West Coast States; Pacific Coast Groundfish Fishery; 2021-2022 Biennial Specifications and Management Measures; Inseason Adjustments

**AGENCY:** National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

**ACTION:** Final rule; inseason adjustments to biennial groundfish management measures.

**SUMMARY:** This final rule announces routine inseason adjustments to management measures in commercial and recreational groundfish fisheries. This action is intended to allow commercial and recreational fishery participants to access more abundant groundfish stocks while protecting rebuilding stocks.

**DATES:** This final rule is effective January 1, 2022.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Sean E. Matson, (206) 526-6140, e-mail: [sean.matson@noaa.gov](mailto:sean.matson@noaa.gov).

#### ADDRESSES:

##### Electronic Access

This rule is accessible via the Internet at the Office of the Federal Register Web site at <https://www.federalregister.gov>. Background information and documents are available at the Pacific Fishery Management Council's website at <http://www.pcouncil.org/>.

## **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

### **Background**

The Pacific Coast Groundfish Fishery Management Plan (PCGFMP) and its implementing regulations at title 50 in the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), part 660, subparts C through G, regulate fishing for over 90 species of groundfish off the coasts of Washington, Oregon, and California. The Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) develops groundfish harvest specifications and management measures for two year periods (*i.e.*, a biennium). NMFS published the final rule to implement harvest specifications and management measures for the 2021-2022 biennium for most species managed under the PCGFMP on December 11, 2020 (85 FR 79880). In general, the management measures set at the start of the biennial harvest specifications cycle help the various sectors of the fishery attain, but not exceed, the catch limits for each stock. The Council, in coordination with Pacific Coast Treaty Indian Tribes and the States of Washington, Oregon, and California, recommends adjustments to the management measures during the fishing year to achieve this goal.

At its meeting on November 15-22, 2021, the Council made recommendations for the 2022 fishing year, which included decreasing trip limits for the Limited Entry (LE) and Open Access (OA) fixed gear (FG) sablefish, Daily Trip Limit (DTL) fisheries north of 36° N. latitude. The Council also recommended increasing trip limits for the fixed gear lingcod fishery, north of 42° N. latitude (LE and OA), beginning January 1, 2022, and for the remainder of the 2022 fishing year unless superseded by a subsequent action. Additionally, the Council recommended new sub-bag limits and sub-trip limits, in recreational and non-trawl commercial fisheries respectively, for two nearshore species, quillback rockfish and copper rockfish, as well as the shelf species vermillion rockfish.

Pacific Coast groundfish fisheries are managed using harvest specifications or limits (*e.g.*, overfishing limits [OFL], acceptable biological catch [ABC], annual catch

limits [ACL] and harvest guidelines [HG]) recommended biennially by the Council and based on the best scientific information available at that time (50 CFR 660.60(b)). During development of the harvest specifications, the Council also recommends management measures (*e.g.*, trip limits, area closures, and bag limits) that are meant to manage catch so as not to exceed the harvest specifications. The harvest specifications and management measures developed for the 2021-2022 biennium used data through the 2020 fishing year. Each of the adjustments to management measures discussed below are based on updated fisheries information that was unavailable when the analysis for the current harvest specifications was completed. As new fisheries data become available, projected impacts of management measures are updated, and the management measures themselves may need to be adjusted so as to help harvesters achieve but not exceed the harvest limits.

Sablefish (*Anoplopoma fimbria*) is an important commercial species on the West Coast, targeted by vessels using both bottom trawl and fixed gear (longlines and pots/traps). The sablefish stock is managed with a coast-wide OFL and ABC, but with separate ACLs north and south of 36° N. latitude. In 2022, the ACL for sablefish north of 36° N. latitude is 6,566 metric tons (mt) with a fishery HG of 5,872 mt. The fishery HG north of 36° N. latitude is further divided between the LE FG and OA sectors with 90.6 percent, or 5,320 mt, allocated to the LE sector and 9.4 percent, or 552 mt, allocated to the OA sector. The LE share is divided so that 58 percent is allocated to trawl and 42 percent is allocated to FG. The LE FG share is further divided between the sablefish primary (tier) fishery (85% or 1,899 mt) and the daily trip limit (DTL) fisheries (15% or 335 mt), as shown in Table 2c to title 50, part 660, subpart C. The sablefish DTL fisheries are individually managed using landing targets (Table 1), which have accounted for discard mortality a priori, by subtracting 4.5 percent from the DTL catch share. This

same method of accounting for discard mortality to calculate the landing target is also used in managing the OA sablefish DTL fishery, north of 36° N. latitude (Table 1).

Lingcod (*Ophiodon elongates*) is another important commercial species on the West Coast, and like sablefish, caught by vessels with both trawl and fixed gear (longlines and pots/traps). The lingcod stock is managed separately north and south of 40°10' N. latitude, with a northern ACL of 4,958 mt in 2022, a fishery HG of 4,679.6 mt, and a northern trawl fixed gear allocation of 2,105.8, or 45 percent of the HG, and a northern non-trawl allocation of 2,573.8, or 55 percent. Lingcod north of 40°10' N. latitude are additionally managed north and south of 42° N. latitude, typically with different trip limits set north and south of that management line.

Quillback rockfish (*Sebastes maliger*) off California (CA), are currently managed as part of the Minor Nearshore Rockfish complex, which is split north and south of 40°10' N. latitude. A stock assessment conducted in 2021 indicated the stock is not healthy, and interim measures to reduce mortality are warranted while broader measures are being developed as part of the 2023-2024 groundfish biennial harvest specifications and management measures. For 2022, the Minor Nearshore Rockfish complex south of 40°10' N. latitude has an ACL of 1,010 mt, with a contribution ACL value for quillback rockfish of 4.18 mt. The Minor Nearshore Rockfish complex north of 40°10' N. latitude has an ACL of 93.4 mt, with a contribution ACL value for quillback rockfish of 9.74 mt. Quillback rockfish are caught in both recreational and commercial fisheries; while considered a deeper nearshore rockfish species, commonly found in waters shallower than 30 fathoms, they can be encountered in deeper waters, and depth-based encounter rates are largely driven by depth restrictions on the fishery. The Minor Nearshore Rockfish complexes, including quillback rockfish, are managed using trip limits in the commercial fixed gear fishery and bag limits in recreational fishery.

Copper rockfish (*Sebastes caurinus*) off CA are also currently managed as part of the Minor Nearshore Rockfish complex, south of 40°10' N. latitude; as well as the Minor Nearshore Rockfish complex north of 40°10' N. latitude, but only in the area between 42° and 40° 10' N. latitude. Copper rockfish are a deeper nearshore rockfish species, but can commonly be found both in shallow nearshore waters, as well as deeper waters considered as the “shelf.” They are caught in both recreational and commercial fisheries. Copper rockfish were also the subject of a 2021 stock assessment which indicated localized depletion within the stock off California. For 2022, the Minor Nearshore Rockfish complex, south of 40°10' N. latitude has an ACL of 1,233.2 mt, and copper rockfish has a component ACL of 202 mt within the southern complex. The Minor Nearshore Rockfish complex, north of 40°10' N. latitude has an ACL of 77 mt, and copper rockfish has an ACL contribution of 8.06 mt within the northern complex.

Vermillion rockfish (*Sebastes miniatus*) off CA are currently managed as part of the Minor Shelf Rockfish complex, south of 40°10' N. latitude; as well as the Minor Shelf Rockfish complex north of 40°10' N. latitude, but only in the area between 42° and 40° 10' N. lat. For 2022, the southern complex has an ACL of 1,428 mt, and vermillion has an ACL contribution of 209.5 mt; the northern complex has an ACL of 1,450 mt, and vermillion has an ACL contribution of 7.6 mt within it.

### **Request, analysis, and Council recommendation**

#### *Sablefish*

At the November 2021 Council meeting, the Council’s Groundfish Management Team (GMT) analyzed updated fishery data, and produced model-based projections for the fixed gear, LE and OA DTL fisheries north of 36° N. lat., for the 2022 fishing year. Model projections for 2022 using the current sablefish trip limits in regulation indicated that catch would dramatically exceed target levels, unless lower limits were adopted. The

GMT modeled lower alternative trip limits, uniformly distributed among bimonthly periods throughout the year, as requested by the Groundfish Advisory Subpanel (GAP). The intent of setting sablefish trip limits is to optimize harvest opportunities, within each annual sector target, for vessels targeting sablefish, under a mix of daily, weekly, and bimonthly landings accumulation limits (commonly referred to collectively as “trip limits”). To evaluate potential decreases to sablefish trip limits, the GMT made model-based projections of landings under current regulations, as well as alternative sablefish trip limits, including the limits ultimately recommended by the Council, throughout the year in 2022. Table 1 shows the projected sablefish landings, the sablefish harvest targets, and the projected attainment percentage by fishery under both the current trip limits and the Council’s recommended adjusted trip limits. These projections were based on the most recent catch information available through early November 2021. Industry did not request changes to sablefish trip limits for the LE or OA DTL fisheries south of 36° N. latitude. Therefore, NMFS and the Council did not consider changes for those fisheries.

As shown in Table 1, under the current trip limits, models predict that landings of sablefish would be far above the harvest targets for LE fixed gear sablefish DTL fishery north of 36° N. lat., at approximately 236 percent attainment, under an average price assumption. Under the Council’s recommended trip limits, sablefish attainment is projected to be within the sector target, in the LE DTL fishery north of 36° N. latitude, at approximately 99 percent attainment under an average price assumption.

The GMT modeled trip limit options for the OA DTL fishery, north of 36° N. latitude which were somewhat lower than the LE trip limits. OA trip limits are typically set lower than in LE, maintaining a higher level of access per vessel for those fishing under a limited entry permit. Trip limits being somewhat lower in the OA fishery also helps to buffer against sometimes high variability in participation, a feature typically not present in the LE fishery. As shown in Table 1, under the current trip limits, models

predict approximately 74 percent attainment, under an average price assumption for OA fixed gear sablefish DTL fishery north of 36° N. lat. Under the Council's recommended trip limits, sablefish attainment is projected at approximately 70 percent attainment (under the same price structure). In this case, the lower projected attainment may also provide something of a buffer, given the higher uncertainty of the OA model, compared with the LE model, and historic potential for volatility in the OA fishery.

**Table 1 -- Projected landings of sablefish, north of 36° N. lat., sablefish harvest target, and projected percentage of sablefish attained through the end of 2021 by fishery and trip limit**

Fishery	Option	Jan-Feb	Mar-Apr	May-Jun	Jul-Aug	Sep-Oct	Nov-Dec	Projected Landings (mt)	Landing Target (mt)	Projected Attainment (Percent)
LE FG DTL North of 36° N. lat.	Current	1,700 lb (771 kg)/week, not to exceed 5,100 lb (2,313 kg)/2 months				4,500 lb (2,041 kg)/week, not to exceed 9,000 lb (4,082 kg)/2 months		792	336	236
	Recommended	2,400 lb (1,089 kg)/week, not to exceed 4,800 lb (2,177 kg)/2 months						334		99
OA FG DTL North of 36° N. lat.	Current	600 lb (272 kg)/day, or 1 landing/week up to 2,000 lb (907 kg), not to exceed 4,000 lb (1,814 kg)/2 months				600 lb (272 kg)/day, or 1 landing/week up to 3,000 lb (1,361 kg), not to exceed 6,000 lb (2,722 kg)/2 months		409	553	74
	Recommended	600 lb (272 kg)/day, or 1 landing/week up to 2,000 lb (907 kg), not to exceed 4,000 lb (1,814 kg)/2 months						387		70

### *Lingcod*

The Council also recommended changes to trip limits in 2022 for lingcod north of 42° N. latitude, after request from industry and analysis by the GMT. Trip limit increases were recommended to provide additional opportunity and increase attainment (current lingcod attainment in 2021 is just 17 percent of the ACL), as well as minimize regulatory

discard because trip limits are being met by vessels in the first few weeks of the bimonthly period, which results in waste and lost revenue. Table 2 shows the current and recommended trip limits for lingcod north of 42° N. latitude. Table 3 shows the projected impacts of those limits to total mortality, and percent attainment of the non-trawl allocation, north of 42° N. latitude. Projected impacts to lingcod fishing mortality from the recommended trip limits are approximately 3.5 percent higher than for current limits. Based on the analysis by the GMT, the higher landing limits are predicted to convert fish that would otherwise be discarded, into landings and revenue, rather than incentivize additional effort. By maintaining a very similar level of effort, and total fishing mortality, this modest increase in trip limits is predicted to increase bycatch of yelloweye rockfish by only a trace amount (< 0.03 mt). Yelloweye rockfish is managed under a rebuilding plan, and is a constraint to fixed-gear lingcod attainment.

**Table 2 -- Current and recommended trip limits for lingcod north of 42° N. latitude**

Option	Fishery	Area	Jan-Feb	Mar-Apr	May-Jun	Jul-Aug	Sep-Oct	Nov-Dec
Current	LE	N of 42° N. lat.	4,000 lb (1,814 kg) / 2 months				5,000 lb (2,268 kg) / 2 months	
	OA		2,000 lb (907 kg) / month				2,500 lb (1,134 kg) / month	
Recommended	LE		5,000 lb (2,268 kg) / 2 months					
	OA		2,500 lb (1,134 kg) / month					

**Table 3 -- Projected impacts for current and recommended trip limits, compared to the non-trawl allocation for lingcod north of 42° N. latitude**

Option	Sector	Area	Mortality Estimate (mt)	LE + OA (mt)	Non-Trawl Allocation (mt)	Attainment of Allocation (percent)
Current	LE	North of	25.8	106.1	2,799.8	3.8 %
	OA		80.3			
Recommended	LE		27.5	109.9	2,799.8	3.9 %



	OA	42° N lat.	82.4			
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### *Quillback, copper, and vermillion rockfish*

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) recommended in the November 2021 PFMC meeting that the Council take inseason action to reduce fishing mortality of quillback, copper, and vermillion rockfish off of California (CA). The recommendation is in response to results of the recent stock assessments. Additionally, CDFW recommended that the Council reduce the existing recreational sub-bag limit of vermillion rockfish, due to recent high catches of this species, south of 40° 10' N. lat. The Council, in response, recommended the following inseason changes to non-trawl fisheries off California for 2022, with the goal of reducing total mortality for quillback rockfish, copper rockfish, and vermilion rockfish.

#### Quillback rockfish

CDFW staff analyzed potential management measure changes to reduce total fishing mortality of quillback rockfish off CA in both recreational and commercial fisheries, in response to results of the 2021 stock assessment. A range of new quillback-specific sub-trip limits were analyzed in order to reduce fishing mortality in the commercial fishery; current and recommended commercial options appear in Table 4.

For the recreational fishery, analysts examined changes to recreational regulations for quillback rockfish that would minimize impacts on fishing opportunities for other groundfish species, applying depth-dependent discard mortality rates for those fish discarded in excess of a recommended sub-bag limit, assuming the existing season by area fishery structure, and maintaining the current mixed species (*i.e.*, Minor Nearshore Rockfish complex) total bag limit of rockfish of 10 fish. Quillback rockfish are caught in recreational fisheries as a small part of a mixed species bag, and more than 50 percent of anglers who catch quillback, catch only one fish.

Results from the CDFW analysis of current regulations and of measures recommended by the Council appear in Table 4. Combined recommended management measures, between recreational and commercial fisheries statewide, were predicted to result in a 1.6 mt, or 12 percent reduction in estimated total fishing mortality. CDFW also plans to add quillback rockfish to the list of species with additional tracking effort, including frequent inseason projections, to make up for reporting lags, and produce estimates of catch to the current date, to accurately inform future inseason actions, if necessary.

**Table 4 -- Combined Projected Recreational and Commercial Impacts Statewide, for Quillback Rockfish Based on Combinations of Current, and Recommended Management Measures for Both Commercial and Recreational Fisheries (mt, Total Projected Mortality)\***

Fishery/option		Commercial	
		Current - no sub-trip limit	Recommended - statewide 75 lb (34 kg)/ 2 months
Recreational	Current - no sub-bag limit	13.5	14
	Recommended - statewide one fish sub-bag limit	11.4	11.9

\* For example, the projection of the total mortality of quillback rockfish that corresponds to implementation of Council-recommended options, including both commercial and recreational catch, appears in the lower right cell (11.9 mt).

Council recommendations for quillback rockfish off CA included:

- Sub-bag limit of one quillback rockfish in the CA recreational fishery
- Minor nearshore rockfish trip limits between 42°- 40° 10' N. lat. of 2,000 lb / 2 months, of which no more than 75 lb (34 kg) can be quillback rockfish
- Deeper nearshore rockfish sub-trip limits south of 40° 10' N. lat. will be 2,000 lb / 2 months, of which no more than 75 lb (34 kg) can be quillback rockfish

Copper rockfish

CDFW staff analyzed potential management measure changes to reduce total fishing mortality of copper rockfish off CA in both recreational and commercial fisheries in 2022, in response to results of the 2021 stock assessment. Copper rockfish are managed as part of the same nearshore rockfish complexes as quillback, are an important part of the same commercial and recreational fisheries as quillback, and the analysis was approached in similar fashion.

Copper rockfish is a popular recreational species, also caught as part of a mixed species bag. Similar to quillback rockfish, analysts examined changes to recreational regulations to reduce total fishing mortality of copper rockfish without disproportionately impacting fishing opportunities for other rockfish species, applying depth-dependent discard mortality rates for those fish discarded in excess of a recommended sub-bag limit, assuming the existing season by area fishery structure, and maintaining the current mixed species, total bag limit of rockfish of 10 fish.

In the commercial fishery, like quillback, copper rockfish is also part of deeper nearshore fisheries managed using permits, and nearshore rockfish complex trip limits, in areas between 42° and 40° 10' N. lat., and south of 40° 10' N. lat., caught with limited entry fixed, and open access gears. A range of new copper-specific sub-trip limits were analyzed in order to reduce fishing mortality in the commercial fishery.

Results from the CDFW analysis of current regulations in addition to measures recommended by the Council appear in Table 5. Combined recommended management measures, between recreational and commercial fisheries statewide, were predicted to result in a 50 mt, or 25 percent reduction in estimated total fishing mortality. CDFW also plans to add copper rockfish to the list of species with additional tracking effort, including frequent inseason projections, to make up for reporting lags, and produce estimates of catch to the current date.

**Table 5 -- Combined Projected Recreational and Commercial Impacts for Copper Rockfish Statewide, Based on Combinations of Current, and Recommended**

**Management Measures for Both Recreational and Commercial Fisheries (mt, Total Projected Mortality).\***

Fishery/option		Commercial	
		Current - no sub-trip limit	Recommended - statewide 75 lb (34 kg) / 2 months
Recreational	Current - no sub-bag limit	202	195.9
	Recommended - statewide one fish sub-bag limit	158.2	152.2

\* For example, the projection that corresponds to implementation of Council-recommended options for both commercial and recreational appears in the lower right cell (152.2 mt).

**Council recommendation:**

- A (new) sub-bag limit of one copper rockfish in the California recreational fishery
- Minor nearshore rockfish trip limits between 42°- 40° 10' N. lat. will be 2,000 lb / 2 months, of which no more than 75 lb (34 kg) can be copper rockfish.
- Deeper nearshore rockfish sub-trip limits south of 40° 10' N. lat. will be 2,000 lb / 2 months, of which no more than 75 lb (34 kg) can be copper rockfish.

**Vermilion rockfish**

Current estimates of total catch of vermillion rockfish south of 40°10' N. lat. in 2021 equal 228.7 mt, which translates to 109 percent of the ACL contribution to the complex ACL. CDFW and the Council expect total catch of vermillion rockfish in 2022 to be similar to 2021. Vermillion rockfish is primarily taken in the recreational fishery, and catch projections were made by CDFW staff. Projections for status quo, and the recommended action appear in Table 6. The recommended action is projected to reduce catch of vermillion rockfish south of 40°10' N. lat. to within the OFL contribution (Table 6), and bring it closer to within the ACL contribution value.

**Table 6 -- Combined Projected Recreational and Commercial Impacts for Vermillion Rockfish Statewide, Based on Alternative Management Measures (Current and Recommended) for Recreational Fisheries (mt, Total Projected Mortality)\*.**

Fishery/option		Commercial catch (current, mt)	Difference between bag limits	2022 OFL contribution	Percent of OFL contribution	2022 ACL contribution	Percent of ACL contribution
Recreational	Current: statewide 5-fish sub-bag limit	270.5	--	269.3	100.4	209.5	129.1
	Recommended: 4-fish sub-bag limit	251.2	19.3		93.3		119.9

\* For example, projected combined catch, assuming the Council-recommended option for recreational fisheries, together with the current commercial limits, appears in row two, column one (251.2 mt, which corresponds to 93.3 percent attainment of the OFL contribution).

Council recommendation:

- Reduce the vermilion rockfish five fish sub-bag limit, to four fish, in the CA recreational fishery

### Summary of changes

Trip limit decreases for sablefish are intended to reduce attainment of the LE and OA DTL fisheries to within their respective fishery targets in the coming 2022 fishing year. Both fisheries contribute to attainment of the non-trawl HG for sablefish north of 36° N. latitude, and maintaining these fisheries' catch levels within their specific targets is important to preserving compliance with the harvest guideline and ACL for this highly economically important and typically highly attained species. The trip limit decreases do not change projected impacts to co-occurring rebuilding species as analyzed in the 2021-2022 harvest specifications because the projected impacts to those species assume that the entire sablefish ACL is harvested.

Recommended increases to lingcod north of 42° N. latitude are intended to both increase fisher opportunity, and convert regulatory discards into landings and associated revenue, and are not predicted to increase effort or bycatch of co-occurring rebuilding species by more than a trace amount (< 0.03 mt of yelloweye rockfish). Therefore, the Council recommended, and NMFS is implementing, by modifying Table 2, North and

South to part 660, subpart E, trip limit changes for the LEFG fishery north of 40°10' N. lat., as well as Table 3, North and South to part 660, subpart F to increase the limits as shown in Table 1 (sablefish), and Table 2 (lingcod) in this rule.

Recommended commercial sub-trip limits for quillback, copper, and vermillion rockfish are intended to reduce fishing mortality off CA, due to new information from stock assessments that indicate overfishing in the case of quillback rockfish, precautionary status in the case of copper rockfish, as well as expected repeated exceedance of the ACL and OFL contribution reference points, as during 2015-2019 and 2021 for vermillion rockfish. Therefore, the Council recommended and NMFS is implementing, changes by modifying Table 2, South to part 660, subpart E, as well as Table 3, South to part 660, subpart F, as shown in tables 4, 5 and 6 in this rule.

Recommended recreational sub-bag limits for quillback, copper, and vermillion rockfish are intended to reduce fishing mortality for those stocks off CA in 2022, due to new stock assessments for this species. Therefore, the Council recommended and NMFS is implementing these changes by modifying 50 CFR § 660.360(c)(3)(ii)(B) the changes shown in table 6 in this rule.

### **Classification**

This final rule makes routine inseason adjustments to groundfish fishery management measures, based on the best scientific information available, consistent with the PCGFMP and its implementing regulations.

This action is taken under the authority of 50 CFR 660.60(c) and is exempt from review under Executive Order 12866.

The aggregate data upon which these actions are based are available for public inspection by contacting Dr. Sean Matson in the West Coast Region (see **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**, above), or view at the NMFS West Coast

Groundfish website:

*<http://www.westcoast.fisheries.noaa.gov/fisheries/groundfish/index.html>*.

Pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 553(b), NMFS finds good cause to waive prior public notice and an opportunity for public comment on this action, as notice and comment would be impracticable and contrary to the public interest. The adjustments to management measures in this document modify trip limits for fisheries off of Washington, Oregon, and California to keep catch within allocations. No aspect of this action is controversial, and changes of this nature were anticipated in the final rule for the 2021-2022 harvest specifications and management measures which published on December 11, 2020 (85 FR 79880).

As stated earlier, the Council recommended reduced sablefish limits for 2022 to keep catch within harvest targets and allocations for their respective fisheries, and within the ACL. New information became available at the November 2021 Council meeting showing that updated 2022 catch projections using the most recent available data were much higher than projections made during the harvest specifications process due to a combination of changing fishery conditions, and trip limit changes made during the 2021 fishing year.

The updated trip limits being implemented in this rule are anticipated to provide for landings and fishing community revenue, while maintaining harvest within scientifically informed conservation limits, concomitant with the goals of the Magnuson Stevens Act.

The Council recommended increased lingcod landing limits to provide additional fisher opportunity and discourage regulatory discard. New information became available at the November 2021 Council meeting indicating that low attainment of lingcod could be somewhat improved in 2022 by increasing landing limits, without attracting undue additional effort, and while discouraging regulatory discard. Implementing the

recommended trip limits is projected to ameliorate this, increase attainment rate of the allocation, and enable additional fish to be landed rather than wasted, producing more fisher and community revenue.

Additionally, the Council recommended new sub-bag limits, and sub-trip limits in recreational and commercial fisheries, respectively, for three nearshore rockfish species: quillback rockfish, copper rockfish, and vermillion rockfish. These changes are necessary to reduce fishing mortality of the three stocks, in order to address recent unfavorable stock biomass as demonstrated through new stock assessments (quillback and copper rockfish), and to reduce catch to within management reference points (vermillion rockfish).

Delaying implementation to allow for public comment would, in the case of lingcod, reduce the economic benefits to the commercial fishing industry and the businesses that rely on that industry because it is unlikely the new regulations would in that case publish and be implemented before the beginning of the 2022 calendar year. For sablefish, quillback rockfish, copper rockfish, and vermillion rockfish off of California, delaying implementation could cause conservation issues, and unsustainable harvest at the levels established in the past, using what is now out of date information. Therefore, providing a comment period for this action could both significantly limit the economic benefits to the fishery, and at the same time hamper the adherence to scientifically informed reference points, created to ensure sustainability of the affected fisheries.

Therefore, the NMFS finds reason to waive the 30-day delay in effectiveness pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 553(d)(1) so that this final rule may become effective upon publication in the **Federal Register**. The adjustments to management measures in this document were requested by the Council's advisory bodies, as well as members of industry during the Council's November 2021 meeting, and recommended unanimously by the Council. No aspect of this action is controversial, and changes of this nature were



anticipated in the biennial harvest specifications and management measures established through a notice and comment rulemaking for 2021-2022 (85 FR 79880; December 11, 2021).

**List of Subjects in 50 CFR Part 660**

Fisheries, Fishing, and Indian Fisheries.

**Authority:** 16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*, 16 U.S.C. 773 *et seq.*, and 16 U.S.C. 7001 *et seq.*

Dated: December 20, 2021.

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Ngagne Jafnar Gueye,

Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries,

National Marine Fisheries Service.

For the reasons set out in the preamble, 50 CFR part 660 is amended as follows:

**PART 660—FISHERIES OFF WEST COAST STATES**

1. The authority citation for part 660 continues to read as follows:

**Authority:** 16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*, 16 U.S.C. 773 *et seq.*, and 16 U.S.C. 7001 *et seq.*

## 2. Revise Table 2 (North) to part 660, subpart E, to read as follows:

**Table 2 (North) to Part 660, Subpart E -- Non-Trawl Rockfish Conservation Areas and Trip Limits for Limited Entry Fixed Gear North of 40°10' N. lat.**

Other limits and requirements apply -- Read §§660.10 through 660.399 before using this table

12/1/2021

		JAN-FEB	MAR-APR	MAY-JUN	JUL-AUG	SEP-OCT	NOV-DEC
<b>Rockfish Conservation Area (RCA)<sup>1/</sup>:</b>							
1	North of 46°16' N. lat.				shoreline - 100 fm line <sup>1/</sup>		
2	46°16' N. lat. - 40°10' N. lat.				40 fm line <sup>1/</sup> - 100 fm line <sup>1/</sup>		
3					30 fm line <sup>1/</sup> - 40 fm line <sup>1/2/</sup>		
<b>See §§660.60 and 660.230 for additional gear, trip limit and conservation area requirements and restrictions. See §§660.70-660.74 and §§660.76-660.79 for conservation area descriptions and coordinates (including RCAs, YRCAs, CCAs, Farallon Islands, Cordell Banks, and EFHCAs).</b>							
State trip limits and seasons may be more restrictive than Federal trip limits or seasons, particularly in waters off Oregon and California.							
4	<b>Minor Slope Rockfish<sup>3/</sup> &amp; Darkblotched rockfish</b>				8,000 lb/ 2 month		
5	<b>Pacific ocean perch</b>				3,600 lb/ 2 months		
6	<b>Sablefish</b>				2,400 lb /week, not to exceed 4,800 lb /2 months		
7	<b>Longspine thornyhead</b>				10,000 lb/ 2 months		
8	<b>Shortspine thornyhead</b>		2,000 lb/ 2 months			2,500 lb/ 2 months	
9	<b>Dover sole, arrowtooth flounder, petrale sole, English sole, starry flounder, Other</b>				10,000 lb/ month		
10	<b>Flatfish<sup>4/8/</sup></b>						
11	<b>Whiting</b>				10,000 lb/ trip		
12	<b>Minor Shelf Rockfish<sup>3/</sup></b>				800 lb / month		
13	<b>Shortbelly Rockfish</b>				200 lb / month		
14	<b>Widow rockfish</b>				4,000 lb/ 2 month		
15	<b>Yellowtail rockfish</b>				3,000 lb/ month		
16	<b>Canary rockfish</b>				3,000 lb/ 2 months		
17	<b>Yelloweye rockfish</b>				CLOSED		
18	<b>Minor Nearshore Rockfish, Oregon black/blue/deacon rockfish &amp; CA black rockfish<sup>5/</sup></b>						
19							
20	North of 42°00' N. lat.				5,000 lb/ 2 months, no more than 1,200 lb of which may be species other than black rockfish or blue/deacon rockfish <sup>4/</sup>		
21	42°00' N. lat. - 40°10' N. lat.				2,000 lb / 2 months, of which no more than 75 lb may be quillback rockfish, and of which no more than 75 lb may be copper rockfish		
22	<b>Lingcod<sup>6/</sup></b>						
23	North of 42°00' N. lat.				5,000 lb/ 2 months		
24	42°00' N. lat. - 40°10' N. lat.				2,000 lb/2 months		
25	<b>Pacific cod</b>				1,000 lb/ 2 months		
26	<b>Spiny dogfish</b>		200,000 lb / 2 months		150,000 lb / 2 months		100,000 lb / 2 months
27	<b>Longnose skate</b>				Unlimited		
28	<b>Other Fish<sup>7/</sup> &amp; Cabezon in California</b>				Unlimited		
29	<b>Oregon Cabezon/Kelp Greenling</b>				Unlimited		
30	<b>Big skate</b>				Unlimited		

TABLE 2 (North)

1/ The Rockfish Conservation Area is an area closed to fishing by particular gear types, bounded by lines specifically defined by latitude and longitude coordinates set out at §§ 660.71-660.74. This RCA is not defined by depth contours (with the exception of the 20-fm depth contour boundary south of 42° N. lat.), and the boundary lines that define the RCA may close areas that are deeper or shallower than the depth contour. Vessels that are subject to RCA restrictions may not fish in the RCA, or operate in the RCA for any purpose other than transiting.

2/ Between 46°16' N. lat. and 40°10' N. lat. and the 30 fm and 40 fm lines, fishing is only allowed with hook-and-line gear except bottom longline and dinglebar gear, as defined in §660.11

3/ Bocaccio, chilipepper and cowcod are included in the trip limits for Minor Shelf Rockfish and splitnose rockfish is included in the trip limits for Minor Slope Rockfish.

4/ "Other flatfish" are defined at § 660.11 and include butter sole, curfin sole, flathead sole, Pacific sanddab, rex sole, rock sole, and sand sole.

5/ For black rockfish north of Cape Alava (48°09.50' N. lat.), and between Destruction Is. (47°40' N. lat.) and Leadbetter Pnt. there is an additional limit of 100 lb or 30 percent by weight of all fish on board, whichever is greater, per vessel, per fishing trip.(46°38.17' N. lat.),

6/ The minimum size limit for lingcod is 22 inches (56 cm) total length North of 42° N. lat. and 24 inches (61 cm) total length South of 42° N. lat.

7/ "Other Fish" are defined at § 660.11 and include kelp greenling off California and leopard shark.

8/ LEFG vessels are allowed to fish inside groundfish conservation areas using hook and line only. See section 660.230 (d) of the regulations for more information.

### 3. Revise Table 2 (South) to part 660, subpart E, to read as follows:

**Table 2 (South) to Part 660, Subpart E -- Non-Trawl Rockfish Conservation Areas and Trip Limits for Limited Entry Fixed Gear South of 40°10' N. lat.**

Other limits and requirements apply -- Read §§660.10 through 660.399 before using this table

12/1/2021

	JAN-FEB	MAR-APR	MAY-JUN	JUL-AUG	SEP-OCT	NOV-DEC
<b>Rockfish Conservation Area (RCA)<sup>1/</sup>:</b>						
1	40°10' N. lat. - 38°57.5' N. lat.		40 fm line <sup>1/</sup> - 125 fm line <sup>1/</sup>			
2	38°57.5' N. lat. -34°27' N. lat.		50 fm line <sup>1/</sup> - 125 fm line <sup>1/</sup>			
3	South of 34°27' N. lat.		100 fm line <sup>1/</sup> - 150 fm line <sup>1/</sup> (also applies around islands)			
See §§660.60 and 660.230 for additional gear, trip limit and conservation area requirements and restrictions. See §§660.70-660.74 and §§660.76-660.79 for conservation area descriptions and coordinates (including RCAs, YRCAs, CCAs, Farallon Islands, Cordell Banks, and EFHCAs).						
State trip limits and seasons may be more restrictive than Federal trip limits or seasons, particularly in waters off Oregon and California.						
4	<b>Minor Slope rockfish<sup>2/</sup> &amp; Darkblotched</b>		40,000 lb/ 2 months, of which no more than 6,000 lb may be blackgill rockfish			
5	<b>Splitnose rockfish</b>		40,000 lb/ 2 months			
6	<b>Sablefish</b>					
7	40°10' N. lat. - 36°00' N. lat.		2,400 lb /week, not to exceed 4,800 lb /2 months			
8	South of 36°00' N. lat.		2,500 lb/ week			
9	<b>Longspine thornyhead</b>		10,000 lb/ 2 months			
10	<b>Shortspine thornyhead</b>					
11	40°10' N. lat. - 34°27' N. lat.		2,000 lb/ 2 months		2,500 lb/ 2 months	
12	South of 34°27' N. lat.		3,000 lb/ 2 months			
13	<b>Dover sole, arrowtooth flounder, petrale sole, English sole, starry flounder, Other</b>		10,000 lb/ month			
15	<b>Flatfish<sup>3/8/</sup></b>					
16	<b>Whiting</b>		10,000 lb/ trip			
17	<b>Minor Shelf Rockfish<sup>2/</sup></b>					
18	40°10' N. lat. - 34°27' N. lat.		8,000 lb. / 2 months, of which no more than 500 lb. may be vermillion			
19	South of 34°27' N. lat.		5,000 lb. / 2 months, of which no more than 3,000lb. may be vermillion			
20	<b>Widow</b>					
21	40°10' N. lat. - 34°27' N. lat.		10,000 lb. / 2 months			
22	South of 34°27' N. lat.		8,000 lb. / 2 months			
23	<b>Chilipepper</b>					
24	40°10' N. lat. - 34°27' N. lat.		10,000 lb. / 2 months			
25	South of 34°27' N. lat.		8,000 lb. / 2 months			
26	<b>Shortbelly Rockfish</b>					
27	South of 40°10' N. lat.		200 lb/ month			
28	<b>Canary rockfish</b>		3,500 lb/ 2 months			
29	<b>Yelloweye rockfish</b>		CLOSED			
30	<b>Cowcod</b>		CLOSED			
31	<b>Bronzespotted rockfish</b>		CLOSED			
32	<b>Bocaccio</b>		6,000 lb/ 2 months			
33	<b>Minor Nearshore Rockfish</b>					
34	Shallow nearshore <sup>4/</sup>		2,000 lb/ 2 months			
35	Deeper nearshore <sup>5/</sup>		2,000 lb/ 2 months, of which no more than 75 lb may be quillback rockfish, and of which no more than 75 lb may be copper rockfish			
36	<b>California Scorpionfish</b>		3,500 lb/ 2 months			
37	<b>Lingcod<sup>6/</sup></b>		1,600 lb / 2 months			
38	<b>Pacific cod</b>		1,000 lb/ 2 months			
39	<b>Spiny dogfish</b>		200,000 lb/ 2 months		150,000 lb/ 2 months	
40	<b>Longnose skate</b>		Unlimited			
41	<b>Other Fish<sup>7/</sup> &amp; Cabezon in California</b>		Unlimited			
42	<b>Big Skate</b>		Unlimited			

TABLE 2 (South)

TABLE 2 (South)

1/ The Rockfish Conservation Area is an area closed to fishing by particular gear types, bounded by lines specifically defined by latitude and longitude coordinates set out at §§ 660.71-660.74. This RCA is not defined by depth contours (with the exception of the 20-fm depth contour boundary south of 42° N. lat.), and the boundary lines that define the RCA may close areas that are deeper or shallower than the depth contour. Vessels that are subject to RCA restrictions may not fish in the RCA, or operate in the RCA for any purpose other than transiting.

2/ POP is included in the trip limits for Minor Slope Rockfish. Blackgill rockfish have a species specific trip sub-limit within the Minor Slope Rockfish cumulative limit. Yellowtail rockfish are included in the trip limits for Minor Shelf Rockfish. Bronzespotted rockfish have a species specific trip limit.

3/ "Other Flatfish" are defined at § 660.11 and include butter sole, curfin sole, flathead sole, Pacific sanddab, rex sole, rock sole, and sand sole.

4/ "Shallow Nearshore" are defined at § 660.11 under "Groundfish" (7)(i)(B)(1).

5/ "Deeper Nearshore" are defined at § 660.11 under "Groundfish" (7)(i)(B)(2).

6/ The commercial minimum size limit for lingcod is 24 inches (61 cm) total length South of 42° N. lat.

7/ "Other Fish" are defined at § 660.11 and include kelp greenling off California and leopard shark.

8/ LEFG vessels are allowed to fish inside groundfish conservation areas using hook and line only. See section 660.230 (d) of the regulations for more information.

### 4. Revise Table 3 (North) to part 660, subpart F, to read as follows:

**Table 3 (North) to Part 660, Subpart F -- Non-Trawl Rockfish Conservation Areas and Trip Limits for Open Access Gears North of 40°10' N. lat.**

Other limits and requirements apply -- Read §§660.10 through 660.399 before using this table

12/1/2021

		JAN-FEB	MAR-APR	MAY-JUN	JUL-AUG	SEP-OCT	NOV-DEC
<b>Rockfish Conservation Area (RCA)<sup>1/</sup>:</b>							
1	North of 46° 16' N. lat.	shoreline - 100 fm line <sup>1/</sup>					
2	46° 16' N. lat. - 40° 10' N. lat.	40 fm line <sup>1/</sup> - 100 fm line <sup>1/</sup>					
3		30 fm line <sup>1/</sup> - 40 fm line <sup>1/2/</sup>					
See §§660.60, 660.330 and 660.333 for additional gear, trip limit and conservation area requirements and restrictions. See §§660.70-660.74 and §§660.76-660.79 for conservation area descriptions and coordinates (including RCAs, YRCAs, CCAs, Farallon Islands, Cordell Bank, and EFHCAs).							
State trip limits and seasons may be more restrictive than Federal trip limits or seasons, particularly in waters off Oregon and California.							
4	Minor Slope Rockfish <sup>3/</sup> & Darkblotched rockfish	2,000 lb / months					
5	Pacific ocean perch	100 lb/ month					
6	Sablefish	600 lb/day, or 1 landing /week up to 2,000 lb, not to exceed 4,000 lb / 2 months					
7	Shortpine thornyheads	50 lb/month					
8	Longspine thornyheads	50 lb/month					
9	Dover sole, arrowtooth flounder, petrale sole, English sole, starry flounder, Other	5,000 lb/ month					
10	Flatfish <sup>4/8/</sup>						
11	Whiting	300 lb/ month					
12	Minor Shelf Rockfish <sup>3/</sup>	800 lb / month					
13	Widow rockfish	2,000 lb/ 2 months					
14	Shortbelly Rockfish	200 lb / month					
15	Yellowtail rockfish	1,500 lb/ month					
16	Canary rockfish	1,000 lb/ 2 months					
17	Yelloweye rockfish	CLOSED					
18	Minor Nearshore Rockfish, Oregon black/blue/deacon rockfish & CA black rockfish						
19	North of 42°00' N. lat.	5,000 lb/ 2 months, no more than 1,200 lb of which may be species other than black rockfish or blue/deacon rockfish <sup>5/</sup>					
20	42°00' N. lat. - 40° 10' N. lat.	2,000 lb / 2 months, of which no more than 75 lb may be quillback rockfish, and of which no more than 75 lb may be copper rockfish					
21	Lingcod <sup>6/</sup>						
22	North of 42° 00' N. lat.	2,500 lb/ month					
23	42°00' N. lat. - 40° 10' N. lat.	1,000 lb / month					
24	Pacific cod	1,000 lb/ 2 months					
25	Spiny dogfish	200,000 lb/ 2 months		150,000 lb/ 2 months		100,000 lb/ 2 months	
26	Longnose skate	Unlimited					
27	Big skate	Unlimited					
28	Other Fish <sup>7/</sup> & Cabezon in California	Unlimited					
29	Oregon Cabezon/Kelp Greenling	Unlimited					
30	SALMON TROLL (subject to RCAs when retaining all species of groundfish, except for yellowtail rockfish and lingcod, as described below)						
31	North	Salmon trollers may retain and land up to 500 lb of yellowtail rockfish per month as long as salmon is on board, both within and outside of the RCA. Salmon trollers may retain and land up to 1 lingcod per 2 Chinook per trip, plus 1 lingcod per trip, up to a trip limit of 10 lingcod, on a trip where any fishing occurs within the RCA. The lingcod limit only applies during times when lingcod retention is allowed, and is not "CLOSED." These limits are within the per month limits described in the table above, and not in addition to those limits. All groundfish species are subject to the open access limits, seasons, size limits and RCA restrictions listed in the table above, unless otherwise stated here.					
32	PINK SHRIMP NON-GROUNDFISH TRAWL (not subject to RCAs)						
33	North	Effective April 1 - October 31: Groundfish: 500 lb/day, multiplied by the number of days of the trip, not to exceed 1,500 lb/trip. The following sublimits also apply and are counted toward the overall 500 lb/day and 1,500 lb/trip groundfish limits: lingcod 300 lb/month (minimum 24 inch size limit); sablefish 2,000 lb/month; canary, thornyheads and yelloweye rockfish are PROHIBITED. All other groundfish species taken are managed under the overall 500 lb/day and 1,500 lb/trip groundfish limits. Landings of these species count toward the per day and per trip groundfish limits and do not have species-specific limits. The amount of groundfish landed may not exceed the amount of pink shrimp landed.					

TABLE 3 (North)

TABLE 3 (North)

1/ The Rockfish Conservation Area is an area closed to fishing by particular gear types, bounded by lines specifically defined by latitude and longitude coordinates set out at §§ 660.71-660.74. This RCA is not defined by depth contours (with the exception of the 20-fm depth contour boundary south of 42° N. lat.), and the boundary lines that define the RCA may close areas that are deeper or shallower than the depth contour. Vessels that are subject to RCA restrictions may not fish in the RCA, or operate in the RCA for any purpose other than transiting.

2/ Between 46°16' N. lat. and 40°10' N. lat. and the 30 fm and 40 fm lines, fishing is only allowed with hook-and-line gear except bottom longline and dinglebar gear, as defined in §660.11

3/ Bocaccio, chilipepper and cowcod rockfishes are included in the trip limits for Minor Shelf Rockfish. Splitnose rockfish is included in the trip limits for Minor Slope Rockfish.

4/ "Other flatfish" are defined at § 660.11 and include butter sole, curfin sole, flathead sole, Pacific sanddab, rex sole, rock sole, and sand sole.

5/ For black rockfish north of Cape Alava (48°09.50' N. lat.), and between Destruction Is. (47°40' N. lat.) and Leadbetter Pnt. (46°38.17' N. lat.), there is an additional limit of 100 lbs or 30 percent by weight of all fish on board, whichever is greater, per vessel, per fishing trip.

6/ The minimum size limit for lingcod is 22 inches (56 cm) total length North of 42° N. lat. and 24 inches (61 cm) total length South of 42° N. lat.

7/ "Other fish" are defined at § 660.11 and include kelp greenling off California and leopard shark.

8/ Open access vessels are allowed to fish inside groundfish conservation areas using hook and line only. See section 660.330 (d) of the regulations for more information.

5. Revise Table 3 (South) to part 660, subpart F, to read as follows:

**Table 3 (South) to Part 660, Subpart F -- Non-Trawl Rockfish Conservation Areas and Trip Limits for Open Access Gears South of 40°10' N. lat.**

Other limits and requirements apply -- Read §§660.10 through 660.399 before using this table

12/1/2021

		JAN-FEB	MAR-APR	MAY-JUN	JUL-AUG	SEP-OCT	NOV-DEC
<b>Rockfish Conservation Area (RCA)<sup>1/</sup>:</b>							
1	40°10' N. lat. - 38°57.5' N. lat.	40 fm line <sup>1/</sup> - 125 fm line <sup>1/</sup>					
2	38°57.5' N. lat. -34°27' N. lat.	50 fm line <sup>1/</sup> - 125 fm line <sup>1/</sup>					
3	South of 34°27' N. lat.	100 fm line <sup>1/</sup> - 150 fm line <sup>1/</sup> (also applies around islands)					
See §§660.60 and 660.230 for additional gear, trip limit and conservation area requirements and restrictions. See §§660.70-660.74 and §§660.76-660.79 for conservation area descriptions and coordinates (including RCAs, YRCAs, CCAs, Farallon Islands, Cordell Banks, and EFHCAs).							
State trip limits and seasons may be more restrictive than Federal trip limits or seasons, particularly in waters off Oregon and California.							
4	Minor Slope Rockfish <sup>2/</sup> & Darkblotched rockfish	10,000 lb/ 2 months, of which no more than 2,500 lb may be blackgill rockfish					
5	Splitnose rockfish	200 lb/ month					
6	Sablefish						
7	40°10' N. lat. - 36°00' N. lat.	600 lb/day, or 1 landing /week up to 2,000 lb, not to exceed 4,000 lb/2 months					
8	South of 36°00' N. lat.	2,000 lb/week, not to exceed 6,000 lb/2 months					
9	Shortpine thornyheads						
10	40°10' N. lat. - 34°27' N. lat.	50 lb/ month					
11	Longspine thornyheads						
12	40°10' N. lat. - 34°27' N. lat.	50 lb/ month					
13	Shortpine thornyheads and longspine						
14	South of 34°27' N. lat.	100 lb/day, no more than 1,000 lb/ 2 months					
15	Dover sole, arrowtooth flounder, petrale sole, English sole, starry flounder, Other	5,000 lb/ month					
16	Flatfish <sup>3/6/</sup>	300 lb/ month					
17	Whiting						
18	Minor Shelf Rockfish <sup>2/</sup>						
19	40°10' N. lat. - 34°27' N. lat.	4,000 lb. / 2 months, of which no more than 400 lb. may be vermillion					
20	South of 34°27' N. lat.	3,000 lb. / 2 months, of which no more than 1,200lb. may be vermillion					
21	Widow						
22	40°10' N. lat. - 34°27' N. lat.	6,000 lb. / 2 months					
23	South of 34°27' N. lat.	4,000 lb. / 2 months					
24	Chilipepper						
25	40°10' N. lat. - 34°27' N. lat.	6,000 lb. / 2 months					
26	South of 34°27' N. lat.	4,000 lb. / 2 months					
27	Shortbelly Rockfish						
28	South of 40°10' N. lat.	200 lb/ month					
29	Canary rockfish	1,500 lb/ 2 months					
30	Yelloweye rockfish	CLOSED					
31	Cowcod	CLOSED					
32	Bronzespotted rockfish	CLOSED					
33	Bocaccio	4,000 lb/ 2 months					
34	Minor Nearshore Rockfish						
35	Shallow nearshore <sup>4/</sup>	2,000 lb/ 2 months					
36	Deeper nearshore <sup>5/</sup>	2,000 lb/ 2 months, of which no more than 75 lb may be quillback rockfish, and of which no more than 75 lb may be copper rockfish					
37	California Scorpionfish	3,500 lb/ 2 months					
38	Lingcod <sup>6/</sup>	700 lb / months					
39	Pacific cod	1,000 lb/ 2 months					
40	Spiny dogfish	200,000 lb/ 2 months		150,000 lb/ 2 months	100,000 lb/ 2 months		
41	Longnose skate	Unlimited					
42	Big skate	Unlimited					
43	Other Fish <sup>7/</sup> & Cabezon in California	Unlimited					

TABLE 3 (South)

TABLE 3 (South)

**Table 3 (South) Continued**

Other limits and requirements apply -- Read §§660.10 through 660.399 before using this table

9/24/2021

		JAN-FEB	MAR-APR	MAY-JUN	JUL-AUG	SEP-OCT	NOV-DEC											
<b>Rockfish Conservation Area (RCA)<sup>1/</sup>:</b>																		
40	40° 10' N. lat. - 38° 57.5' N. lat.		40 fm line <sup>1/</sup> - 125 fm line <sup>1/</sup>															
41	38° 57.5' N. lat. - 34° 27' N. lat.		50 fm line <sup>1/</sup> - 125 fm line <sup>1/</sup>															
42	South of 34° 27' N. lat.		100 fm line <sup>1/</sup> - 150 fm line <sup>1/</sup> (also applies around islands)															
<b>See §§660.60 and 660.230 for additional gear, trip limit and conservation area requirements and restrictions. See §§660.70-660.74 and §§660.76-660.79 for conservation area descriptions and coordinates (including RCAs, YRCAs, CCAs, Farallon Islands, Cordell Banks, and EFHCAs).</b>																		
43	<b>SALMON TROLL</b> (subject to RCAs when retaining all species of groundfish, except for yellowtail rockfish, as described below)																	
44	South of 40° 10' N. lat.	Salmon trollers may retain and land up to 1 lb of yellowtail rockfish for every 2 lb of Chinook salmon landed, with a cumulative limit of 200 lb/month, both within and outside of the RCA. This limit is within the 4,000 lb per 2 month limit for minor shelf rockfish between 40o10' and 34o27' N lat., and not in addition to that limit. All groundfish species are subject to the open access limits, seasons, size limits and RCA restrictions listed in the table above, unless otherwise stated here.																
45	<b>RIDGEBACK PRAWN AND, SOUTH OF 38° 57.50' N. LAT., CA HALIBUT AND SEA CUCUMBER NON-GROUNDFISH TRAWL</b>																	
46	<b>NON-GROUNDFISH TRAWL Rockfish Conservation Area (RCA) for CA Halibut, Sea Cucumber &amp; Ridgeback Prawn:</b>																	
47	40° 10' N. lat. - 38° 00' N. lat.	100 fm line <sup>1/</sup> - 200 fm line <sup>1/</sup>	100 fm line <sup>1/</sup> - 150 fm line <sup>1/</sup>				100 fm line <sup>1/</sup> - 200 fm line <sup>1/</sup>											
48	38° 00' N. lat. - 34° 27' N. lat.	100 fm line <sup>1/</sup> - 150 fm line <sup>1/</sup>																
49	South of 34° 27' N. lat.	100 fm line <sup>1/</sup> - 150 fm line <sup>1/</sup>																
50		Groundfish: 300 lb/trip. Species-specific limits described in the table above also apply and are counted toward the 300 lb groundfish per trip limit. The amount of groundfish landed may not exceed the amount of the target species landed, except that the amount of spiny dogfish landed may exceed the amount of target species landed. Spiny dogfish are limited by the 300 lb/trip overall groundfish limit. The daily trip limits for sablefish coastwide and thornyheads south of Pt. Conception and the overall groundfish "per trip" limit may not be multiplied by the number of days of the trip. Vessels participating in the California halibut fishery south of 38o57.50' N. lat. are allowed to (1) land up to 100 lb/day of groundfish without the ratio requirement, provided that at least one California halibut is landed and (2) land up to 3,000 lb/month of flatfish, no more than 300 lb of which may be species other than Pacific sanddabs, sand sole, starry flounder, rock sole, curffin sole, or California scorpionfish (California scorpionfish is also subject to the trip limits and closures in line 29).																
51	<b>PINK SHRIMP NON-GROUNDFISH TRAWL GEAR</b> (not subject to RCAs)																	
52	South	Effective April 1 - October 31: Groundfish: 500 lb/day, multiplied by the number of days of the trip, not to exceed 1,500 lb/trip. The following sublimits also apply and are counted toward the overall 500 lb/day and 1,500 lb/trip groundfish limits: lingcod 300 lb/ month (minimum 24 inch size limit); sablefish 2,000 lb/ month; canary rockfish, thornyheads and yelloweye rockfish are PROHIBITED. All other groundfish species taken are managed under the overall 500 lb/day and 1,500 lb/trip groundfish limits. Landings of all groundfish species count toward the per day, per trip or other species-specific sublimits described here and the species-specific limits described in the table above do not apply. The amount of groundfish landed may not exceed the amount of pink shrimp landed.																

Table 3 (South) Continued

Table 3 (South) Continued

1/ The Rockfish Conservation Area is an area closed to fishing by particular gear types, bounded by lines specifically defined by latitude and longitude coordinates set out at §§ 660.71-660.74. This RCA is not defined by depth contours (with the exception of the 20-fm depth contour boundary south of 42° N. lat.), and the boundary lines that define the RCA may close areas that are deeper or shallower than the depth contour. Vessels that are subject to RCA restrictions may not fish in the RCA, or operate in the RCA for any purpose other than transiting.

2/ POP is included in the trip limits for minor slope rockfish. Blackgill rockfish have a species specific trip sub-limit within the minor slope rockfish cumulative limits. Yellowtail rockfish is included in the trip limits for minor shelf rockfish. Bronzespotted rockfish have a species specific trip limit.

3/ "Other flatfish" are defined at § 660.11 and include butter sole, curffin sole, flathead sole, Pacific sanddab, rex sole, rock sole, and sand sole.

4/ "Shallow Nearshore" are defined at § 660.11 under "Groundfish" (7)(i)(B)(1).

5/ "Deeper Nearshore" are defined at § 660.11 under "Groundfish" (7)(i)(B)(2).

6/ The commercial minimum size limit for lingcod is 24 inches (61 cm) total length South of 42° N. lat.

7/ "Other fish" are defined at § 660.11 and includes kelp greenling off California and leopard shark.

8/ Open access vessels are allowed to fish inside groundfish conservation areas using hook and line only. See section 660.330 (d) of the regulations for more information.

6) In § 660.360, revise paragraph (c)(3)(ii)(B) to read as follows:

**§ 660.360 Recreational fishery - management measures.**

\* \* \* \* \*

(c) \* \* \*

(3) \* \* \*

(ii) \* \* \*

(B) *Bag limits, hook limits.* In times and areas when the recreational season for the RCG Complex is open, there is a limit of 2 hooks and 1 line when fishing for the RCG complex. The bag limit is 10 RCG Complex fish per day coastwide, with a sub-bag limit of 4 fish for vermilion rockfish, 1 fish for quillback rockfish, and 1 fish for copper rockfish. These sub-bag limits count towards the bag limit for the RCG Complex and are not in addition to that limit. Retention of yelloweye rockfish, bronzespotted rockfish, and cowcod is prohibited. Multi-day limits are authorized by a valid permit issued by California and must not exceed the daily limit multiplied by the value of days in the fishing trip.

\* \* \* \* \*

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